

FACTUAL ACCOUNTS OF "LUKOUCHTAO" CASE

Recorded by Wang Len-ch'ai.

Relative to the inception of Japanese invasion of North China and to the history of "Lukouchiao" case, ex-Mayor of Peiping, Mr. Ching Teh-tsung, has already made out a factual report. Mr. Ching was then one of the high-ranking officials in North China. At the inception of the war, Chairman Sung Cheh-yuen of the Political Council for the Provinces of Hopei and Chahar was on leave at his native place. Mr. Ching was made to act on his behalf on all matters, diplomatic as well as military. He personally directed and conducted all negotiations and military defense. Therefore, what he has recorded is factual and truthful. I was then the Executive Supervisor for the 3rd District of Hopei Province and concurrently the Magistrate of Wan-ping Hsien. Lukouchiao, where the Japanese started the initial attack, is within the district of my jurisdiction, and I had personally participated in all of the negotiations and conducted military defense. I shall now proceed to relate the situation then existing:

I assumed the duties of the above-mentioned offices in the fall of 1936, when the Japanese were intensifying their measures of invasion. Consequently, there were numerous negotiations taking place, and the situation was considerably critical. The city of Wan-ping is the stronghold in the outskirts of Peiping and is the center of communications in North China. The jurisdiction of Wan-ping Hsien extends to Lukouchiao on the Peiping-Hankow Line, Fengtai on the Pei-ning Line and Tsingho on the Peiping-Suiyan Line. With the occupation of Fengtai by the Japanese troops, they were in the position to control the communications of Peiping-Hankow Line and cut off North China from Central China, thereby making North China into what they called the "Special Sphere of Influence", which they had been yearning for ever since a long time ago. The Japanese by repeating what they had successfully tried out in the North-eastern Three Provinces, hoped to achieve the occupation of North China without sacrificing one single soldier and one single bullet. With this end in view, they started with "peaceful invasion". After they had occupied Fengtai and stationed troops there, they tried to take Lukouchiao as well. Had this been successful,

Peiping would be under their control with a single pincer-movement, and the 29th Army would also be kept under watch. Earlier, they had, with the cooperation of Chen Chush-sun, then the Director of the Peiping-Liaoning Line, and in the name of the Railway Administration, effected a survey of some six thousand mu of land lying between Fengtai and Lukouchia. With the surveying done, they approached our authorities with the request that this land be either rented or sold to the Japanese army for the purpose of building barracks and airfield. Several approaches were made in Peiping, but were categorically refused by us. Unsuccessful in these attempts, they turned to the inhabitants of the place, over whom they tried to buy with money. They made the inhabitants there to sign a petition to the Magistrate Government, alleging that they would voluntarily sell the land to the Japanese, so as to get some money to maintain their living on one hand and to avoid the forceful oppression of the Japanese on the other hand. Knowing that this being a trick played by the Japanese after they could not achieve what they wanted in their dealings with the Chinese authorities through their Special Service Corps in Peiping and their headquarters in Tientsin, and realizing that it was my duty not to give up one single inch of land to the invader, I summoned all the inhabitants there and exhorted them. Overwhelmed with patriotism, they swore not to sell the land, neither to move from the place without having shed blood. The sworn statement was fingerprinted, in order to show their determination. Subsequently, when the Japanese approached with the saying that the inhabitants were willing to sell the land, we showed them the sworn statement. Aware of the impossibility of "peaceful invasion", they could not but resort to military aggression. Then there followed the war at Lukouchiao on 7 July 1937.

The war of Lukouchiao was started as a consequence of the Japanese military maneuvers which they performed upon Chinese soil freely without any treaty rights and without notifying the local Chinese authorities beforehand. From the time of my assumption of office up to the outbreak of the Lukouchiao Incident, the Japanese staged maneuvers no less than six times. With a view to maintaining the peaceful relations with Japan we did not seek to stop them by force. But the Japanese paid no attention to our protests against their repeated maneuvering. There was once when after the maneuver,

I protested and called their attention to the fact that such might cause misunderstanding among the inhabitants, the Japanese replied that since the scale of maneuver was small and the guns were not loaded, they would not cause any disturbance, but promised that they would notify us if they decided to maneuver with loaded guns and rifles. They did, afterwards, maneuver with actual firing, but, instead of notifying the Chinese authorities, sent their interpreters to inform the inhabitants. These showed that the plan of their invasion must have been meticulously studied and that the tempo was being gradually intensified till a certain time when it was ripe for them to wage the war.

At around 11 o'clock on the night of July 7, 1937, a few shots were heard to have been fired from the outskirts of Wan-ping city. Investigation reports showed that the Japanese troops were then staging maneuvers. I directed close attention to this matter. Soon Mayor Ching telephoned me that a protest had been lodged by MATSUI, commander of the Japanese Special Service Corps, alleging that one of the Japanese soldiers was found missing after the Chinese garrison forces at Wan-ping had opened fire at the Japanese maneuvering troops, and demanding that the Japanese troops should be allowed entry into the city to conduct searches. I was instructed to investigate into the matter at once and submit a report. A number of my men were detailed and sent out to investigate inside as well as outside of the city. But no missing soldier was ever found. I immediately proceeded to Peiping where I reported to Mayor Ching. Pressed for a settlement by Commander MATSUI, I was ordered to take up negotiations, in the company of Mr. Wei Tsung-han, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. Lin Ken-yu, member of the Committee and Mr. Chow Yun-yeh, Director of the Department of Communications, under the Pacification Headquarters, with the Japanese representatives. Commander MATSUI insisted that it was true that they had one soldier missing and kept on demanding the entry of the Japanese troops into the city to conduct searches by themselves. I refused it outrightly and recalled that the Japanese Consul-General at Nanking, Mr. KURAMOTO, who was claimed to have been missing, was found to have hidden himself for the purpose of putting blames on the shoulders of the Chinese government. I hinted that this particular Japanese soldier might have tried to imitate what the Japanese Consul-General had done. Commander MATSUI denied the fact. As a result of the negotiation, it was decided that both Japanese and Chinese authorities should jointly send members out to Wan-ping to conduct an investigation on the spot, and that a satisfactory settlement should be reached. Representatives from

our side included Messrs. Lin and Chow and myself, while the Japanese representatives were Messrs. TERAHIRA and SAITO. I was also visited by Commander MUDA of the Japanese army who intimated to me that since the situation had been very serious, I should have full authority to settle the matter on the spot and that if I had to refer to the authorities at Peiping for instructions, there might not be time enough. My answer was that before instituting a preliminary investigation no settlement could be made. In leaving the "Legation Quarters" for Wan-ping, Mr. Chow and SAITO started off in one car followed by another car carrying Mr. Lin, TERAHIRA and myself. When we approached Sha-k'an, i.e., Han-tung on the Lukouchiao Railway, about a mile from Wan-ping, I observed a unit of Japanese troops under the direction of MORITA, deputy regiment commander, already taking up field positions at Sha-k'an. Mr. TERAHIRA then asked me to alight from the car and said to me that having seen this, I must now be able to realize the seriousness of the situation. He further threatened that there was no time left for conducting any investigation and that I should give orders to open the city gates. Without letting the Japanese troops enter into the city, he said, no settlement could be effected. MORITA went so far as even trying to threaten me by force. I took the situation very easily and told them that since it was decided at the office of the Japanese Special Service Corps that the first step would be to conduct investigation and that the second step would be to try to effect a settlement, any departure from the decision would be contradictory to it. I asked that if they would be responsible for any aggravation of the situation, should we not follow what had already been decided. They later came to realize that it would be futile for them to threaten me in such a way, and finally agreed to abide by the decision previously reached, that is, to conduct an investigation first. Then, I went into the city with Mr. TERAHIRA.

After entering the city, we held a discussion in my office. I had just ordered the Director of Police Bureau to make his report on the search when a number of gunshots were heard, and bullets were zooming past our heads. Undoubtedly, the Japanese troops had already opened fire. A few minutes later, our guards on the city walls began to return firing. The duel lasted for about another hour. The Japanese officer in command, MUDA, sent me a note, asking that I should go out of the city

with Lt. Col. Chi Hsin Wen who was then guarding the district and try to effect a truce. I refused on the ground that both Lt. Col. Chi and I had been charged with the duty of guarding the city, and therefore, were not in a position to leave without being so ordered. Thereupon, Mr. Lin Ken-yu together with TERAHIRA went out, by climbing over the city wall. Two hours had elapsed since then, and we heard nothing from them. The Japanese started shooting again, and we also returned fire. The skirmishes lasted until 4 p.m. with considerable losses on both sides. By five o'clock in the afternoon, they again attacked us with trench mortars and hit and blasted my office which was entirely destroyed. Fortunately enough, I had removed all my staff to a safer place a few minutes before this happened. After 6 p.m., the firing quieted down. The Japanese commander, one named KAWAPE, Shoso, also sent a note to me and asked me to go out of the city for negotiation, failing which, I should see that all the inhabitants be evacuated because they would bombard the city with heavy artillery. I declined the demand. At that moment, our reinforcements from Changchintien arrived, and that very night, our Big Sword Company fought hand to hand against the Japanese troops Lungwanmiao. As this Company of ours was well trained and extremely brave, many Japanese soldiers were killed. The iron bridge which was hitherto occupied by the Japanese was recaptured. Being routed, the Japanese became quiet.

The next morning, a telephone message was received from Mayor Ching, stating that the Japanese had asked for a discussion of truce, ostensibly owing to the fact that a part of their troops were routed the previous night. Accordingly, I was told that there were three conditions included in the truce, namely, 1) both sides shall stop forthwith all activities of war; 2) troops of both sides shall return to their respective positions; and 3) the garrison duties of the city shall be taken over by the Peace Preservation Corps of the Northern Hopei Province. The Peace Preservation Corps had then a force of three hundred strong, which was to be expected to arrive in two hours' time. Meanwhile, a Japanese adviser, Mr. KASAI and his interpreter, Mr. ALZAWI, came into the city with some wine, allegedly for celebrating peace. But shortly after they left, firing again started. That was about 4 p.m. The Peace Preservation Corps had not yet then arrived. Inquiry was made, and I was

told that when the Corps passed through Tachints'un (mid-way between Peiping and Lukouchiao) they were halted by the Japanese troops and that fighting had already been in progress between them. The Peiping authorities then took up the matter with the Japanese army headquarters represented by HASHIMOTO. The latter, however, refuted what was previously agreed upon and stated that the Peace Preservation Corps did not need a force of three hundred men and that they did not have to carry machine guns. We tried to resist his demand, but to no avail. Consequently, only one hundred fifty men of the corps entered into the city and the machine guns were also not brought in. The Japanese Army sent their advisers, NAKASHIMA and SAKURAI over, together with our Mr. Lin Ken-yu and Mr. Chow Sze-chin, members of the General Staff, to supervise the withdrawal of troops. Abiding with the agreement, our units under the command of Lt. Col. Chi Hsin-wen retreated to their original line. The Japanese units were then withdrawn toward Fengtai. But it was later found out that some one hundred Japanese soldiers along the railway tunnel were not withdrawn. On being asked, NAKASHIMA promised that they would all be withdrawn and guaranteed that no fighting would be ever resumed. During midnight that night, the Japanese troops there again fired at the city for almost half an hour. With refusal of the Japanese to withdraw their troops along the railway, I knew for sure that they were inclined to be tricky. The Japanese, having built some military constructions there, would surely try to stick to that place. With this ambition unabated, I was afraid that the truce was but a scheme devised by the Japanese to gain time. I persistently asked NAKASHIMA who was then supposed to supervise the withdrawal, to hasten his side to fulfill the conditions as set out and agreed upon. He agreed to go to Peiping with me to effect a settlement there. The next morning I proceeded to Peiping with NAKASHIMA, and when the train passed through Hantung (a tunnel) I did observe a few Japanese soldiers standing on guard outside Hantung. This served to prove constructively the Japanese intrigues.

On arrival at Peiping, I went to Mayor Ching's residence where I met General Feng Chih-an, Chairman of Hopei Province, Colonel Cheng Hsi Hsien, Commander of the Peace Preservation Corps of the Northern Hopei. The Japanese adviser, SAKURAI, and secretary, SAITO, came in a few minutes later. I made a report to Mayor Ching and

Chairman Feng or the refusal of the Japanese troops to withdraw from the railway line. Mayor Ching than called NAKASHIMA, SAKURAI, SAITO, Cheng Hsi-hsien and myself to a meeting and discussed the matter thoroughly. SAITO offered the explanation that because some of the corpses of Japanese soldiers killed in action were not found yet, a certain number of Japanese troops were, therefore, stationed there and promised that as soon as the corpses were found, they would immediately withdraw. I asked why did they need to station troops there when they were trying to locate the corpses. SAITO replied that if the size of troop was too small, they were afraid that they might be murdered by the Chinese army, and that for the sake of self-defense, they had to station a large size of troops there. Mayor Ching considered this as an evasion and some heated argument ensued. Finally, it was agreed that an unarmed search party should be organized, with 10 men from our side and 10 from the Japanese army. All these men should carry no arms, and they were given one day to conduct and finish the search. Whether or not they found the corpses, the Japanese were to withdraw upon expiration of that one day's time. Having no pretext nor means to drag the matter further, they agreed to this. While we were discussing the organization of the search party, NAKASHIMA and his people left the meeting without announcing their departure. Then, we received telephone messages from various sources, informing us that the Japanese army had sent some reinforcements from Kupeikou, Shanhaikwan and other places, totalling not less than two Japanese Divisions. Some airplanes were reported to have arrived at Tientsin. A part of the Japanese troops were observed marching toward Lukouchiao. Meanwhile, communications between Peiping and Wan-ping were also broken up. That the Japanese had frequently changed their attitudes showed nothing but their intrigue. They oscillated between fighting and peace-making in order to gain time. Not a few days after the war started, they came to realize that they had under-estimated our strength. Not only we put up a very satisfactory defense at Lukouchiao, but also we made some gains at Papaoshan (mid-way between Peiping and Mengtukou). The attempt of the Japanese to overpower us with one division of troops then stationed at Tientsin, was, of course, frustrated. With the Japanese intrigues bared, I knew for sure that the outbreak of major warfare would follow soon. With nothing to hope for in the way of peaceful or diplomatic negotiations, I left Peiping for Wan-ping through Mentukou and Changhsintien.

Ever since then, fighting was intermittently going on, till the 22nd of July, when rumor of another truce was in the air again. The Japanese asked the Chinese authorities to replace the bellicose 37th Division and transfer it to southern Hopei, and suggested that the points along Peiping and Lukouchiao be garrisoned by the 132nd Division of the 29th army. They would then withdraw toward Fengtai. Some headway was made out of the negotiation, and a cease-fire order was given. However, the Japanese ceased fighting in daytime but kept on shelling at the city in the night. On being asked for an explanation, they pretended that this would serve as a cover for the troops to withdraw. On the 26th, they suddenly sent over an ultimatum demanding the withdrawal of our 37th army from Peiping within 24 hours. Being so cornered and pressed, our authorities ordered to attack. A very fierce counter-attack was launched by our forces at Lukouchiao and Papaoshan, and onslaught was made toward Fengtai. On the 27th, the railway station at Fengtai was recovered. But on the 28th, the Japanese concentrated all their forces and attacked us near Nan-yuan, with the help of army airplanes and artillery. The fight lasted until 2 p.m. General Chao Teng-yu, Commander of the Division and General Toong Lin-ke, Deputy-Commander of the 29th army were killed in action. Chairman Sung Cheh-yuan, following instructions from the Supreme Commander, left for Paoting to assume his command, while General Cheng Tze-chung, Division Commander, was instructed to stay on in Peiping, to help the various troops coordinating their defense. I was, however, instructed to proceed to Paoting also.

Judging from the above accounts, one would readily realize that the Japanese invasion was a studied and systematic scheme which was not meted out overnight. They should be made to shoulder the full responsibilities of the war.

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Formerly, Magistrate of Wan-ping  
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Executive Supervisor for the  
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